



Mr. HOMER'S SERMON
ON THE
DEATH OF CHILDREN.

DECEMBER 7, 1792.





MR. JAMES H. HARRISON



DEATH OF CHILDREN

DECEMBER 7, 1892



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THE
MOURNER'S FRIEND,
OR,
Consolation, and Advice

OFFERED TO
CHRISTIAN PARENTS

IN
THE DEATH
OF THEIR
LITTLE CHILDREN,
AS CONTAINED IN A

SERMON,
PREACHED AT NEWTON,
DECEMBER 7, 1792.

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MDCCXCIII.

THE following Sermon was delivered upon the death of a very dear and promising child, of whose future life, and accomplishments his affectionate parents had cherished the fondest hopes. The Author consents to its publication, as a small monument of love, reared to the memory of their only Son, and as a tribute of sincere friendship and sympathy to them. The gospel has taught them to mourn, not as those who have no hope. Benevolence inspires the wish, that the consolations, which have calmed their mind, may be successfully administered to all, who weep over the dust of their tender offspring.

To the solace, and improvement of such, and to their sympathetic friends, the sentiments, now offered, are dedicated. They are addressed, not to the critic ear, but to the wounded heart. This will not reject, with severity, the honest attempt, to offer a healing balm, which has been efficacious to the relief of a like distress.



S E R M O N.

2 S A M. 12 CH. 23 V.

BUT NOW HE IS DEAD, WHEREFORE SHOULD I FAST?

CAN I BRING HIM BACK AGAIN? I SHALL GO TO HIM, BUT HE SHALL NOT RETURN TO ME.

TENDER, beyond the conception of those, who have never sustained the relation, are the ties, which unite the heart of parents to their offspring.

A SECRET joy thrills through the whole frame from the idea of infantile existence, even previous to the first dawn of reason. The tender pledge of virtuous love knits their souls in firmer mutual union, whilst their sympathetic attention is directed to its helpless, dependent state. Ardent is the wish to see its mental powers expand. They hail the moment, in which commence the tokens of attention, and filial regard. The earliest accents from its lisping tongue strike their ear like the softest strains of musick, and they anticipate, with rapture, the period, in which they shall discover, by the medium of converse, the pleasing openings of the mind.

WHEN, therefore, Death, with ruthless hand, approaches

proaches to snatch it from their bosom, to dissolve these new, yet strong ties, and to lay their hopes in the dust, keen and painful sensations must be excited.

SUCH were the sensations of the monarch of Israel upon the dangerous sickness of his child.

THE history of DAVID proves, that his parental feelings were exquisitely tender. When the hand of the LORD struck the child with a sore and alarming disease, his bowels yearned over it. Each sigh, each pain pierced his own heart. That this sweet infant, whose eye, whose countenance, perhaps, beamed a soft lustre, and indicated, in his view, an energy of soul, promising a happy display in future life, should be involved in deep distress, in the agonies of death, was a thought productive of inexpressible torture.

BUT as he knew, that its life was at the disposal of GOD, who, upon his humiliation and prayer, might retract his threatening, he retired into his closet to pour out his soul before him. Impressed with the most anxious sensibility, and deeply conscious of unworthiness, he prostrated himself, in the lowliest manner, at the divine footstool. Here his tears, and cries were mingled together, to deprecate the blow.

HE refused to arise from his humble situation, to take food at the customary hours, though the princes of his court warmly urged this attention to his own health and life. At such a season the usual repasts are easily forborne, and the greatest delicacies pall upon the appetite, which seeks no pleasure, or refreshment.

BUT the Sovereign Arbiter of life saw fit to remove the child on the seventh day, probably, from the commencement of its illness. When, therefore, DA-

VID collected his death from the whispers and countenances of the domesticks, who feared, by announcing it, to overpower his whole nature, he asked, "Is the child dead?" Being certified of the event, he knew, that his prostrations and prayers for its recovery were vain.

WITH a calmness, which surprised his family and friends, "he arose from the earth, washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel," that he might not appear in the habit of a forlorn mourner. He did not cherish dishonourable sentiments of the hand which wounded him, or refuse to acknowledge the equity of the blow. His first thoughts were directed to God, who had taken his dear child to his own bosom, and who alone could console him. "He came," therefore, immediately, "into the house" or tabernacle "of the Lord." Perhaps he went not to view its breathless body, till he had publicly owned the justice of the dispensation, and obtained grace to fortify his bosom for such a scene.

THE death of his dear son did not lead him to impeach the wisdom, or equity of the divine government. No. He worshipped God in his sanctuary, presenting his sacrifices, prayers, and even praises, before all the people, that he might openly honour Him as his beloved and rightful Sovereign. He was ready to declare, that he had no cause to complain of the punishment of his sins. He adored the goodness, which spared his own forfeited life, by which he might glorify JEHOVAH, whom, alas! he had criminally forgotten. He, doubtless, implored, and rejoiced in the light of his countenance, as his supreme unmerited felicity, and sought those divine aids, which
might

might teach him a holy improvement of his situation. These would inspire him with a disposition to sing of mercy and of judgment, and to honour the bounteous Source of good in the use and enjoyment of remaining blessings.

UPON his return to his palace, his mind was so serene, that "he required his servants to set bread before him." His health and life were important to the surviving branches of his family, and to the people of his kingdom. He had, probably, new scenes of usefulness to each of them opening to view. He cherished an ardent desire to discharge his duties as a Husband, a Father, and a Monarch with greater fidelity and affection.

THE unexpected change, consequent upon the death of the child, being suggested to him, he observed, as became a parent, and a candidate for another state of being, "Whilst the child was yet alive, I fasted, and wept; for I said, Who can tell, whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live?" His fears were predominant. Yet he indulged a hope, that his strong cries and tears might be accepted by Him, who hears prayer, and who sometimes converts his threatenings into mercies.

"But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." q. d. The sentence is irrevocably executed. My fasting, my prostrations, my entreaties cannot avail to procure his return. Gladly would I submit to the severest, long-protracted mortifications, if they might restore my dear son. But I cannot rationally expect such a miraculous display of divine power.

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God demands not of me, to devote my future life to melancholy on account of this dispensation. I have professed, in my prosperity, to rejoice, that the LORD reigns. I dare not devote myself a prey to sorrow, lest I appear to forget this leading, sublime doctrine of my religion.

"AND NOW, LORD, what wait I for? My hope is in Thee." I impeach not thine administration. "Thou," a Sovereign infinitely perfect, "hast done it." Though my nature be almost consumed with the weight of the stroke, yet it is in thy power to support me by thine everlasting arms. Already I feel the strong consolations of religion, enabling me to triumph over the agonies of nature. I am conscious, that it is my duty to attend to the instituted means of life, that I may perform, in a purer manner, my various obligations to my Maker, and the offices of justice and humanity to my subjects and family. Thus shall I best prepare for the hour, when I shall follow my deceased child, and shall behold it, drest in new and celestial charms, among the saints made perfect. I will, then, solace myself, in future hours of tender painful recollection, with the dear idea, of going to him at death, and of mingling with him in the eternal services and joys of heaven.

THE royal Father knew also the uncertainty of those future scenes which might have awaited him, had he recovered from his illness, and been permitted to see the years of manhood. The path of life might have been so thickly strewed with thorns, as to produce a wish, that he had been removed, at an earlier age, from burdens too hard for nature. Or temptation might have so stolen away his heart,

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amidst

amidst the vivacity and inexperience of youth, as to lead him to forget, and even to violate the laws of society, and of religion. Such, afterwards, was the instance of ABSALOM, whose boundless ambition steeled him to every filial or loyal sentiment, and over whom, dying in the act of rebellion, if not the intention of parricide, DAVID mourned, with far keener anguish than on the present occasion, and said with a bleeding, yet forgiving heart, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom; would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

APPLICABLE, and highly instructive are the words of our text to those from whom dear children, or other esteemed relatives are removed by death.

THEY teach us that immoderate grief, at their departure, is unavailing and improper—and that the great object of our attention should be to prepare to follow them.

I. IMMODERATE grief, at their departure, is unavailing, and improper.

RELIGION does not suppress every painful or tenderly-melting emotion in the recollection of the deceased. Till the ties of nature be dissolved within us by death, and we become members of the great family, which surrounds the throne of God, we cannot destroy those sympathies, which are peculiar to the present state.

JESUS, who was the Son of man, as well as the Son of God, wept over the grave of his beloved LAZARUS, and was dissolved into tears at the keen sensibility of his mourning sisters.

"Who shall teach those, that never felt it," (says Dr.

Dr. DODDRIDGE, in a sermon on the death of a promising child, which displays all the paternal affection of the Roman Orator, united with the exalted heights of christian piety) "how it tears the very soul, when
 " God roots up the tender plant with an inexorable
 " hand, and withers the bud, in which the colours
 " were beginning to glow?—Alas ! all the loveliness of person, of genius, and of temper, serves but
 " to point, and to poison the arrow, which is drawn
 " out of our own quiver to wound us."

A STOICAL apathy is not required of us in such a situation. The heart, which is conscious of no wound, inflicted by the death of a child, or friend, which never recalls the lost object to view, or maintains an unclouded serenity without one sigh or tear in the recollection, seems depressed far below humanity.

WHEN Sarah died, during the absence of Abraham on a journey, the patriarch came, upon information of the sorrowful event, to mourn and weep for the loss of the companion of his youth, and of his advanced age. When Joseph and his brethren, with their attendants, brought the corps of Jacob to the threshing floor of Atad, near which they were to deposit the remains of their venerable father, "they mourned with a very great and fore lamentation," as an affectionate tribute to his memory. The children of Israel wept for the removal of their illustrious Leader, and successful Mediator, Moses, thirty days. General and deep was the lamentation at the death of Samuel, the faithful Prophet of the Most High, and the watchful Guardian of the people. All Israel is described as bewailing the death of Abijah, the Son
 of

of Jeroboam, "in whom," though a young child, and educated amidst false principles and vicious examples, "there was found some good thing," some appearance of early piety "towards the LORD GOD."

BUT there is a difference between our feelings as men, and as Christians. Our nature, if indulged, would cherish its grief, till every faculty sunk beneath its weight, and we became entirely unfit for any duty or enjoyment of life. We ought, therefore, to guard against immoderate sorrow.

"BUT now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again?" Could we remand the lost object of our affection from the grave by our keen distress, could our weeping and wailing rouse him from the slumbers of death, or our mortifications, however long, or self-denying, procure his restoration to our embrace, our anguish might be more rationally indulged. Yet we expect not the revocation of the sentence, which has thus destroyed "the hope of man," till the dust of all the dead be awakened by the angelic trump, which shall penetrate the bowels of the earth, and extend its piercing notes to the deepest caverns of the sea.

A KNOWLEDGE (if such there be) of the poignancy of our distress cannot gratify them, whose perfected souls glow with benevolence in the world of love. They, if permitted, would gladly perform the part of ministering spirits, to whisper, in our ear, some strong consolation, which might soothe our breast, and renew the wonted smile of serenity on our brow.

IF we suffer grief to exhaust our animal powers, and to debilitate the mind, we cannot discharge the duties of our stations or relations, which are urged
on

on us by the providence, or word of God. The surviving members of our family, or of society require an attention to ourselves, an endeavour to regain that calmness and equanimity, by which we may promote their happiness and improvement.

UNBOUNDED sorrow will render us insensible of the divine kindness, which still extends a variety of benefits, that call for gratitude. Our state of mind, which will permit us to "weep with them who weep," will incapacitate us for a duty, equally inculcated by the sacred canon, to "rejoice with them who rejoice." We shall also blunt the force of those consolations, which, drawn from religion, are adapted to support the soul, and to teach it resignation to the divine allotments. Our temper, our conversation, our deportment, so far from leading others to profit by affliction, will testify, that we have lost our portion, our supreme good, and that the truths, the prospects, the promises of religion are insufficient to produce the resolution of the Prophet, "I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.*"

A REPINING, murmuring disposition will probably connect itself with our grief. Such was the case of Jonah, who, deprived of the leafy gourd, which formed an arbour to shelter him from the meridian sun, dared to reply to his Maker, when its scorching rays darted with violence on his naked head, "I do well to be angry.†" Neither do we appear to ripen, under

* Habakkuk 3. 18.

† Dr. Taylor, the learned Author of the Hebrew Concordance, observes, that the question of *JEHOVAH*, Jon. 4. 4 and 9, should have been rendered, "Art thou very much grieved?" The answer of the Prophet will then be less harsh than in our version, "I am very much or *intensely* grieved." Some of the Criticks in *Poli Synopsis* seem to favour this rendering. The same Hebrew verb has even a laudable signification, when applied to Baruch, (Neh. 3. 20) who "*intensely* or *earnestly* applied himself to repair the wall." It means any warm violent exertion of the mind, though chiefly that arising from anger.

der our sorrows, for a residence in that city, which "needeth not the sun or moon to shine in it," mere sublunary objects to form the basis of its happiness, where "the LORD GOD does lighten it" sufficiently with the rays of his infinite glory, "and the LAMB is the light thereof."

II. THE great object of our attention should be, to prepare to follow our deceased children, or friends.

"I SHALL go to him, but he shall not return to me." He has gone the way of all the earth. He has arrived at "that home of man, where dwells the multitude." His departure is designed, to render death, with which we are all so intimately connected, more familiar to our mind.

WHEN the good D'EON of France " (to whose tomb the poor of his district, for some time after his death, used to resort in crowds, to weep over it, and deplore the loss of their benefactor)" was dying, he addressed his only child, "My dear daughter, be not too deeply agitated. TO DIE SHOULD BE ESTEEMED BY US AS NATURAL AS TO LIVE. I go to a purer happier country. I have devoted all my cares, to teach you to live well. It remains, that I teach you to die well."

BUT the removal of a child, as well as of a parent, affords instruction to survivors. It urges those, who bewail their death, to live as dying, accountable beings, that they may be prepared to die in peace.

THEY knew, that the seeds of dissolution were interwoven with its frame at the very birth. He who gave life, not only had a right to resume it, but had actually informed them of his determination to convert the body into its original dust. The time for accomplishing

accomplishing his design he saw fit to lodge among the arcana of his own breast.

If the fair scion budded, and began to blossom to their fond admiring view, and seemed to promise abundant fruit in its maturity, it might be suddenly snatched from these inclement skies, ere all its foliage had expanded. It might be taken from the parental hands, which fostered it, and which could not ensure its protection, or successful culture. Transplanted near the tree of life, and the river of life, in the paradise of God, it might bloom with celestial and immortal verdure, and yield fruits, such as are the repast of angels, and can never be plucked by the Tempter, or be nipt by the frost of death.

Smitten friends

Are angels sent on errands full of love.

For us they languish, and for us they die.

And shall they languish, shall they die in vain?

YOUNG.

THEY urge their surviving relations and friends to prepare for their own departure. The ancient Romans, after putting the urn, which contained the bones and ashes of the dead, into its sepulchre, used to close the funeral rites with these last words, "Farewel, Farewel, Farewel. We too shall follow according to the order, which nature permits." † The death of little children proclaims the frailty of their parents in a most affecting manner. A part, a very dear part of themselves has been laid in the grave. They have trodden the gloomy path before those, who expected them to close their eyes, and to consign their bodies to the dust.

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† Vale, Vale, Vale. Nos te ordine, quo natura permiserit, cuncti sequemur.

How then shall they prepare to follow them, but by sedulously cherishing the virtues and graces of our holy religion?

HUMILITY and deep repentance should be daily exercised for their sins, by which they have forfeited these precious comforts, and each remaining good. "Shall a man," says Jeremiah, "a living man complain for the punishment of his sins?" "I have sinned," says even holy Job, in his afflictions, "what shall I do unto Thee, O thou Preserver, (or, as it may be rendered, Observer) of men?"

THEIR heart should beat love to that God, who, by his presence, is ready to fill the void, which has been made by the removal of their offspring. To Him should their eye be directed, as their exceeding joy, as the inexhaustible Fountain of happiness. From the broken cistern they should repair to the infinite Source of good, and seek that pleasure from the light of his countenance, from a sense of his friendship, and the survey of his glory, which their little ones, in the tenderest moments of endearment, could not give.

THEIR own spared life should be devoted to his honour, and, by their steady obedience, they should aim to ripen for that world, where "his servants serve him," and "his name is written on their forehead" in conspicuous heavenly characters.

THEY should endeavour to quicken each other to redeem their time, to watch, and to pray, that they may be ready to soar to the world of spirits at the Saviour's call. An increase of reciprocal friendship, and kind attentions, will render their solitary situation less gloomy, and is a duty enjoined by that law of love, which is obligatory on them. Es-

ESPECIALLY should they, with greater diligence, educate their surviving offspring in the nurture and admonition of the LORD, and attempt to lead their opening minds to the faith, the love, the hope, and obedience of the gospel.

THE duties, which they owe to society, should also be performed with more alacrity. They will find a healing balm to their wound from planning and executing schemes of usefulness (if in their power) towards the wide family of mankind. Thus, whilst their beneficence will testify their relation to the Father of mercies as his children, and to JESUS as the disciples of a Master, who "went about doing good," they will become fitter for the felicity of heaven.

YET let them not forget, in the performance of their duties, to acknowledge themselves, agreeably to Christ's advice, "unprofitable servants," who have only discharged their indispensable obligations, without expiating their past sins, or the defects attending their virtues. Their faith must be directed to JESUS as the medium and foundation of hope. Renouncing confidence in their own righteousness, they should expect, and profess to expect, salvation, only by the righteousness of CHRIST, who has magnified the violated law of his FATHER by "an obedience unto death." The mere consciousness of a well-spent life is insufficient to calm the believer in the near prospect of dissolution, and the consequent trial of the soul at the divine tribunal. He is too sensible of his own sins, and of the pure character and will of God, to expect the blessings of immortality as the merited reward of his own goodness. In proportion to the ardour of his holy pursuits, the commandment opens

to him more and more broad, and his own imperfections are magnified to his view.

He asks salvation, therefore, upon the plea of grace, and he can triumph over Death, only by adopting the temper, and language of the Apostle, "Thanks be to GOD, who giveth us the victory through our LORD JESUS CHRIST."*

WHILST then the religion of the gospel teaches us, how to prepare to follow our children and friends into the world of spirits, we have ample occasion to bless GOD for its consolations and supports. We are invited, yea, commanded to "rejoice evermore." "Rejoice in the LORD alway, and again I say, rejoice,"

* 1 Cor. 15. 57. In the long list of those, who, after a life of warm piety, and extensive beneficence, have disclaimed all merit in themselves, and have ascribed the honour of their redemption solely to the Son of God, I am happy to reckon a THORNTON, and a HOWARD of England, the greatest philanthropists of the present age, whose fortune and talents were remarkably devoted to the glory of God, and the good of mankind.

Mr. Thornton, a little before his death, wrote the following verses, upon receiving a mourning ring for a relation of his name.

"Welcome, thou presage of my certain doom !

I too must sink into the darksome tomb.

Yes, little prophet ! thus my name shall stand

A mournful record on some friendly hand.

My name ! tis here, the characters agree,

And every faithful letter speaks to me ;

Bids me prepare to meet my nature's foe,

Serene to feel the monster's fatal blow ;

Without a sigh to quit the joys of time,

Secure of glory in a happier clime ;

Then mount the skies, forsake my old abode,

And gain the plaudit of a smiling God.

Receive, LORD JESUS, body, soul, and spirit !

BEHOLD MY PLEA, THY SUFFERINGS AND THY MERIT."

Mr. Howard, who visited hospitals, lazarettoes, prisons, and dungeons, in various countries, for the relief, and reformation of the most wretched objects of humanity, and who fell a sacrifice to his benevolent attempts in a foreign distant land, observes in a letter, to a friend, dated Venice, Oct. 1786, "My performances are truly over-rated. Even in our best exertions there is a miserable alloy of sin. I bless GOD, that I know myself too well, to be pleased with such praise. My private burial and my tomb I had fixed ; and that my executor might know, that my mind was unaltered, the last thing, that I said to him, was, not to move me, if I died abroad ; and that I would have only a plain slip of marble placed under that of my wife (Henrietta) with this inscription,

JOHN HOWARD died ———, aged ———. MY HOPE IS IN CHRIST."

joice," was an injunction of the Apostle PAUL, to which he himself conformed amidst the greatest trials and distresses incident to human nature.

WE wonder not, that the philosophers of antiquity, ignorant of the true GOD, who governs the world, of the infinite wisdom, and benevolence ordaining the events of life, or of the prospects of futurity, which open to us, were unable to dictate calmness and submission to themselves, or friends in deep adversity.

"WHEN CICERO lost his beloved daughter Tullia, he shunned all company as much as he could, and therefore removed to the house of his friend ATTICUS, where he lived chiefly in his library, turning over every book he could meet with on the subject of moderating grief. But finding that this situation would not entirely seclude him from company, he retired to a seat fixed on an island covered with woods and groves, cut into shady walks, a scene of all others the fittest to indulge melancholy, and where he could give a free course to his grief. "Here," says he in a letter to his friend, "I live without the speech of man. Every morning early I hide myself in the thickest of the wood, and never come out till the evening. Next to yourself, nothing is so dear to me as this solitude, and my whole conversation is with my books."†

Who would not wish, that a father thus affectionate, thus sorely wounded, had been conversant with that sacred volume, which has supported so many parents of different ages, and countries under a similar distress, and might have afforded him a serenity, to be derived from no other source?

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† See Article, Cicero, in Encyclopædia.

How happy then are we, who have the book of God, as our companion, instructor, and comforter in trouble ! This causes the waves of adversity to subside, when they roll across our agitated breast. This proffers an aid, which an ATTICUS, or all the philosophers, or writings of heathen antiquity, could not give.

THIS requires us, in the name of the LORD of the universe, to "be still, and know, that he is God." This assures the Christian of his readiness to sustain him by his own almighty arm, by the presence, the grace, the promise of an all-sufficient Friend, who has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." This teaches, that "he does not afflict willingly, nor "grieve the children of men," to display his arbitrary pleasure ; that "whom the LORD loveth, he chasteneth ;" and that "the present affliction, which is "but for a moment, worketh out a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory."

THIS too, in the loss of our young offspring, or Christian friends, points us to the abode of their ascended spirits, invites us to forget their temporary separation from our embrace, and to anticipate the period, when they shall bid us welcome to the realms of day.

WHAT then, if any in this assembly deplore the loss of one of their most precious earthly jewels ? What if the child of their fond hopes, and gay expectations, in whom a glowing imagination, a peculiar aptness to receive instruction, an understanding improved beyond his years, a diffusive benevolence of temper, an eye, and a countenance, which seemed to indicate a soul formed for extensive and active

active walks of life in mature years, the child, on whom the divine benediction was often and ardently implored, and for whom the parents wished as the noblest reward of their exertions, that he should tread in wisdom's ways, and that, in his ripened age, he should announce life and immortality to his fellow-men, and lead them towards the realms of holy bliss? What, I say, if their child be rent from their bosom? What, if they have been called to perform the last office of humanity to a Son, an ONLY SON, and such a son as we have described, and at an age peculiarly alluring? †. What, if they have consigned him to the grave at the very time, in which they had planned to conduct him to their new and fair mansion, where the advancing display of his mental powers was one of their chief expected terrestrial joys?

RELIGION forbids them "to mourn as those, who have no hope," on whose mind, enveloped with darkness, the rays of revelation have never shone.

REASON declares, that "tears will not water the "lovely plant, so as to cause it to grow again; sighs "will not give it new breath, nor can they furnish it "with life and spirits by the waste of their own." §

BUT the gospel furnishes superior arguments, to suppress their sighs. It calls their attention from the body, the broken stem of the fair flower, which rests, beneath the watchful eye of its SAVIOUR, in hope of the resurrection. It bids them pursue its departed spirit to the realms above, and mark its affectionate reception by Jesus, who, on earth, took the little children, commended to him, into his arms, and

† JOSEPH WARD, son of Col. JOSEPH WARD, died, Nov. 30, 1792, aged 5 years, 3 months, and 9 days.

§ Sir William Temple.

and blessed them, saying, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." It tells them, that he still lives, and reminds them of the exalted dignity connected with their new relation, as "**PARENTS OF A GLO-RIFIED SAINT.**"

It allows them, by faith, to penetrate within the veil, separating between this, and the eternal world, to contemplate him adorned with a robe of glory, a palm, the ensign of his Redeemer's victory, in his hand, and a crown of righteousness on his head. See him prostrating himself at the footstool of **JEHOVAH**, overwhelmed, and sweetly absorbed, in the blaze of his infinite perfections. There, with innumerable hosts of seraphs, and perfected spirits of the just, he hymns the praises of his **GOD**, and **SAVIOUR**, and adores the stroke, which removed him to the "house, not made with hands," of his eternal **FATHER**.

THITHER sin and sorrow never intrude. Its prospects and employments infinitely exceed those, to which the fondest and most successful parental efforts could have led their child in this state of imperfection. There his pious ancestors of former generations have welcomed him to their common abode. There he waits, with raptured expectation, for the season, when he shall hail the arrival of his dear parents, who, in joint concert with him, shall shout the praises of his **FATHER**, and their **FATHER**, of his **GOD**, and their **GOD** through eternity.—"That
 "endeared affection to their child, which might have
 "been a cord to tie them to earth, and have added
 "new pangs to their removal from it, should now
 "serve as a golden chain to draw them upwards, and
 "add one further charm and joy even to paradise it-
 "self."

"self." Let then the tearful eye suspend its weeping, and the wounded heart be ready to cherish the consolations of religion. Remember, at each recollection of the dear deceased, the reflections of the monarch of Israel under the bereaving hand of God, "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

LET all, who have felt the inexpressible pang, inflicted by the death of dear and amiable children,* welcome the instructions and supports, proffered by the religion of JESUS to their solitary situation. Let them hear their offspring addressing them from their coffins, or rather, from the invisible world, which they inhabit, to "number their" future uncertain "days, so as to apply their hearts unto wisdom," to divert their thoughts and affections from the exhausted stream to the "Fountain of living waters."

To bereaved parents, who seek a religious improvement of their sorrow, we may address the soothing language of a DODDRIDGE, who keenly felt, whilst he dwelt among mortals, the woes which pierce them, and uttered the notes, that suggested peace to his own breast.

Ye mourning saints, whose streaming tears,
Flow o'er your children dead,
Say not, in transports of despair,
That all your hopes are fled.

Whilst,

* Alluding, particularly, to the parents of AMOS CHENEY, a virtuous promising youth, of FANNY HICKS, and of NANCY MURDOCK, whose mental charms, even in childhood, much endeared them to their connections. The two first were only children. These died of the small-pox. The friends of Miss LOIS STRATTON, who lately died of the same disease (aged 20), and who through all her distressing illness shone with peculiar splendor as a christian, may also consider themselves addressed by the leading sentiments of the sermon. She was unexpectedly seized on the day succeeding her public profession of religion, and participation of the Lord's-supper.

Whilst, cleaving to that darling dust,
 In fond distress ye lie,
 Rise, and with joy and rev'rence view
 A heavenly Parent nigh.
 Though, your young branches torne away,
 Like withering trunks ye stand,
 With fairer verdure shall ye bloom,
 Touch'd by the Almighty's hand.

"I'll give the mourner," saith the LORD,†
 "In my own house a place ;
 "No names of daughters and of sons
 "Could yield so high a grace.
 "Transient and vain is every hope
 "A rising race can give ;
 "In endless honour and delight
 "My children all shall live."

We welcome, LORD, these rising tears,
 Through which thy face we see,
 And bless those wounds, which through our hearts,
 Prepare a way for Thee.

† II. 56. 5.

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Widw